

## REMARKS

### **Request for Personal Interview**

Applicants respectfully request a personal interview with the Examiner to discuss this amendment in view of the cited art. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned, Steve Stewart, at 503-469-4685 to schedule a convenient time should the Examiner pick up this amendment for consideration prior to the scheduling of an interview.

### **Claim Status**

Claims 1-17, 19-25 and 37-45 are pending in the present application. Claims 41-45 are newly presented and are believed to be supported by the application as filed.

Claims 13, 18 and 26-36 have been canceled without prejudice to the combinations recited therein. We reserve the right to file one or more continuing applications claiming these combinations. We expressly traverse the outstanding rejection of these claims; the claims have been canceled merely to simplify issues for this amendment.

Claims 14, 16, 17 and 19 have been amended in independent form, and generally recite features that are related to those previously recited in now-canceled claim 13. To be clear, however, the scope of these claims has been broadened. For example, the term "business card" has been broadened to "physical object" or "printed object"; the term "watermarked" has been broadened to "steganographic encoding"; the preamble has been broadened; and some instances of "internet" have been broadened to "network." The Examiner is invited to inspect the claims for the exact changes. No forfeiture of equivalent arrangements is intended by these amendments.

Claim 1 has also been amended in an editorial manner, and not in response to the prior art of any formal requirements. (The changes are actually believed to broaden the scope of the claim.)

Claims 8, 9 and 20 are amended to remove the terms "the step of." Claim 9 has also been amended to remove the term "stored."

Claim 37 has also been amended in independent form. Please note that amended claim 37 has also been broadened relative to its former version. Claims 38 and 39 are amended to even better conform to newly amended claim 37.

### **Specification Amendments**

The specification has been amended to include patent numbers.

### **Art-Based Rejections**

Claims 1-17, 19-25 and 37-40 stand rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,978,773 (hereafter referred to as “the Hudetz patent”) in view of European Patent Application no. 493,091 (hereafter referred to as “the Tow application”). We expressly traverse these rejections.

### **Claim 1**

Claim 1 is believed to recite a patentable combination.

The method recites accessing a central site to obtain a steganographically-encoded item, the item including at least a unique identifier. Once obtained, the steganographically-encoded item is applied to a document. Data relating to a proprietor of the document is input into a database and is associated with the unique identifier.

While the Hudetz patent (i.e., col. 5, lines 55-58) may generally discuss the internet, it does not disclose that steganographically-encoded items can be obtained there from for application to a document.

One example of an item is a graphic or design. The graphic or design includes steganographic encoding. The encoded graphic or design, once obtained from the central site, is applied to a document. (Of course, there are many other examples of an “item” as well).

The Tow application is not cited for, nor is it understood to teach or suggest, an accessible central site, which provides access to a plurality of encoded items, in combination with the remaining features of claim 1.

We respectfully request reconsideration.

*Claims depending from Claim 1*

Many of the dependent claims are also believed to be patentable in their own right.

For example, claim 5 recites that the data of claim 1 include a vCard. The proposed references (i.e., the Hudetz patent and the Tow application) are not understood to teach or suggest such a combination.

Claim 7 recites that the data of claim 1 comprises pronunciation data. The proposed references are not understood to teach or suggest such a combination.

Claim 8 further recites translating the data of claim 1 into a different language. The proposed references (i.e., the Hudetz patent and the Tow application) are not understood to teach or suggest such a combination.

Claim 9 further recites providing an audio pronunciation of the data of claim 1. The proposed references are not understood to teach or suggest such a combination.

Individual consideration of the remaining dependent claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 14

Claim 14 is believed to recite a patentable combination.

The method recites providing a steganographically encoded item for integration with a physical object, the encoded item including a unique identifier associated with a network database; receiving data in the network database, the received data corresponding to a proprietor of the physical object; associating the received data with the unique identifier; and permitting access to the received data in the network database when presented with the unique identifier. *The received data includes a current contact-channel.*

The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor are the proposed references understood to teach this combination.

Claim 14 should be allowed.

*Dependent claim 15*

Claim 15 recites that the current contact-channel of claim 14 includes an immediate contact number. The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

*Dependent claim 20*

Claim 20 further recites notifying an object-recipient when the received data changes. The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

Claim 16

Claim 16 is believed to recite a patentable combination.

The method recites providing a steganographically encoded item for integration with a printed object. The encoded printed object includes a unique identifier associated with a network database. Data is received in the network database, the received data corresponding to a proprietor of the printed object; associating the received data with the unique identifier. Access to the received data in the network database is permitted when presented with the unique identifier. *Claim 16 further provides that a digital file includes a pronunciation of at least some of the received data.*

The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

Claim 16 should be allowed.

Claim 17

Claim 17 is believed to recite a patentable combination.

The method recites providing a steganographically encoded item for integration with a printed object, the encoded item including a unique identifier associated with an internet database; receiving data in the internet database, the received data corresponding to a proprietor of the printed object; associating the received data with the unique identifier; permitting access to the received data in the internet database when presented

with the unique identifier. *Claim 17 further provides a digital file comprising a translation of at least some of the received data.*

The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

Claim 17 should be allowed.

#### Claim 19

Claim 19 is believed to recite a patentable combination.

The method recites providing a steganographically encoded item for integration with a printed object, the encoded item including a unique identifier associated with an internet database; receiving data in the internet database, the received data corresponding to a proprietor of the printed object; and associating the received data with the unique identifier; permitting access to the received data in the internet database when presented with the unique identifier. *Claim 19 further recites standardizing the format of the received data, wherein the format comprises a vCard.*

The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

Claim 19 should be allowed.

#### Claim 37

Claim 37 is believed to recite a patentable combination.

The method recites presenting a physical object associated with an individual to an optical sensor, the optical sensor producing output data; decoding steganographically-encoded plural-bit data from the sensor output data; and using said plural-bit data to establish a link to a network address having data relating to the proprietor of physical object. *Claim 37 further recites obtaining from the network address calendar data detailing certain activities of the individual.*

The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

Claim 37 should be allowed.

*Dependent claim 38*

Claim 38 recites that the amount of calendar data obtained in claim 37 depends on an authorization level. The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

*Dependent claim 39*

Claim 39 recites that the authorization level of claim 38 is reflected in the plural-bit data encoded in the physical object, wherein an individual can distribute differently-encoded objects to different recipients, to grant the recipients different access rights to said calendar data. The August 23, 2004, Office Action did not consider this combination, nor do the proposed references teach this combination.

New Claim 41

New claim 41 is loosely related to claim 1, but from a server or receiving side perspective.

Claim 41 recites a method including: receiving a request through a network interface to obtain a graphic or design from a gallery of graphics or designs; upon a selection of a graphic or design, steganographically encoding the graphic or design with at least one plural-bit identifier; associating the identifier with an entity that requested the graphic or design; and providing the steganographically encoded graphic or design through the network interface.

The proposed combination of references is not understood to teach or suggest such a combination.

We respectfully submit that claim 41 should be allowed.

New Claim 45

New claim 45 is loosely related to claim 1, but from a server or receiving side perspective.

Claim 45 recites a method including: receiving a request at a central computer to obtain a steganographically-encoded graphic or design from a gallery of steganographically-encoded graphics or designs, the graphic or design including at least

one plural-bit identifier; associating the identifier with an entity associated with the request; and providing the steganographically-encoded graphic or design from the central computer.

The proposed combination of references is not understood to teach or suggest such a combination.

We respectfully submit that claim 45 should be allowed.

*Remaining claims*

Individual consideration of the remaining claims is respectfully requested.

**Information Disclosure Statement**

An information disclosure statement is filed herewith. Consideration of the information cited therein is respectfully requested. We also understand that all of the information considered in our parent applications will also be considered in this application (see, e.g., MPEP 609).

**Conclusion**

The application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early notice of allowance is respectfully requested. (Applicants need not belabor the other shortcomings of the art at this time.).

Nevertheless, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 503-469-4685 if any issue remains.

Date: November 30, 2004


Respectfully submitted,

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